

BOUNDARY INVENTORY FILE

Hungary-Rumania Boundary

The long-standing controversy between Hungary and Rumania over the ownership of Transylvania has been subordinated since the end of World War II and is currently not a matter of active contention. Here, as elsewhere, a Soviet-imposed peace ostensibly has reduced friction between the two countries over an area that had long been a source of serious contention and a cause of much resentment and ill-feeling. Neither country is now openly pressing claims for border changes, but on the other hand the basic issues that provided fuel for the Transylvanian dispute in the past still persist and have not been resolved to the satisfaction of Hungary.

The present boundary between the two countries was established by the Treaty of Trianon after World War I, which transferred to Rumanian control the general Transylvanian region, comprising historic Transylvania, the Rumanian Banat, and the Crişana and Maramureş regions. The Transylvanian region is ethnically heterogeneous, but the Rumanian element of the population is in the majority for the region as a whole. Hungarians comprise the second largest population group, forming a local majority in eastern Transylvania and large minorities in other parts of Transylvania and in the border regions of Crişana and Maramureş. Hungary has long agitated for the return of those areas having large Hungarian populations.

The Vienna Award of 1940 returned a portion of this disputed territory to Hungary, but the Treaty of Paris in 1947 nullified the gain and restored the boundary to its position as of 1 January 1938. Thus, the present boundary is fixed under the terms of the Treaty of Paris, and no subsequent agreements concerning the status of the boundary have been noted.

Transylvania still has a large Hungarian minority, and the welfare of this group apparently still concerns Hungary, although not to the point of openly contesting the boundary. One specific source of concern to Hungary is the recent (1960) Rumanian reorganization of the territorial-administrative divisions of Rumania, involving changes in both the status

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and extent of the Magyar Autonomous Region in eastern Transylvania, which was established and defined under Article 19 of the 1952 Constitution of the Rumanian People's Republic. The 1960 administrative reform included an amendment to Article 19, changing the name of the area to Mures Magyar Autonomous Region. It is believed that this may eventually lead to the dropping of the term "Magyar Autonomous" from the name and that at some future date the area may well be known simply as the Mures Region.

The administrative reform also diluted the ethnic basis for the Magyar Autonomous Region by transferring to the region three districts (Ludus, Sarvas, and Tirnaveni Raions) containing Hungarian minorities and removing two districts (St. Gheorghe and Tirgu Secuiesc Raions) in which Hungarians form a large majority. Ostensibly, these transfers were made in the interest of greater economic and administrative efficiency, but they also are charged with political meaning. Furthermore, an amendment to Article 18 makes future territorial changes possible without reference to the Constitution.

The amendments to Articles 18 and 19 may very well lead eventually to the amendment of Articles 20, 21, 57, and 58 of the 1952 Constitution -- the sections granting certain special privileges to the Magyar Autonomous Region. These actual and potential changes threatening the status of the Hungarian minority in Rumania are undoubtedly matters of concern to Hungary, but it is difficult to foresee any public revival of the historic Transylvanian controversy in the near future, at least.

Only recently has any evidence of negotiations concerning the frontier region come to light. In July 1962, representatives of Hungary and Rumania signed an agreement pertaining to problems arising from the use of frontier waters, but as yet no details are available on the exact provisions of the agreement. The small beginnings that have been made toward solving the boundary disagreement between the two countries, however, do not get to the heart of the problem from the Hungarian point of view.